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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/414,547	10/08/1999	TOKIMORI TOMITA	122.1046-D/G	3462
21171	7590	05/02/2006	EXAMINER	
STAAS & HALSEY LLP SUITE 700 1201 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20005			KARMIS, STEFANOS	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3624	

DATE MAILED: 05/02/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/414,547	TOMITA ET AL.	
	Examiner Stefano Karmis	Art Unit 3624	

— The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address —
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 February 2006.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 78-91 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 78-91 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All. b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____. |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____. | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____. |

DETAILED ACTION

1. The following communication is in response to Applicant's amendment filed 27 February 2006.

Status of Claims

2. Claims 78-91 are currently amended. Claims 1-77, 92 and 93 are canceled. Therefore claims 78-91 are currently pending.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments filed 27 February have been fully considered but they are not persuasive as discussed below. Therefore claims 78-91 stand rejected and Applicant's request for allowance is respectfully declined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

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6. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

7. Claims 78-91 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schultz et al. (hereinafter Schultz) U.S. Patent No. 5,056,019 in view of Humble U.S. Patent No. 4,949,256.

Regarding claim 78, Schultz teaches a point management system connected with a customer terminal via a communication link, employing a computer for managing points issued to each customer who receives services according to the issued points, as discussed in the previous office action mailed 25 August 2005. Applicant states in the remarks that Schultz fails to teach a notifying unit to notify the customer of the cumulative points if the customer is successfully identified by a customer identification unit without requiring that the customer execute a transaction. The examiner respectfully disagrees. Schultz teaches that a customer purchases products and that a record is kept of the reward products purchased (column 7, lines 45-65). Schultz teaches that periodically, usually monthly, the customer receives a status report, which notifies the customer of his cumulative purchase rewards (points) as well as other rewards available (column 8, lines 42-68). This notification is a monthly notification, and is not in response to requiring that the customer perform a purchase. Further, Schultz teaches that the data is stored according to an identification code of the consumer (column 8, lines 25-29). This

data incorporates transaction data, but it does not require that the customer have executed a transaction. If the customer executes no transaction in a given month, the status report will still retrieve the same data and be sent to the customer.

Applicant also asserts that the customer terminal accesses a designated website when notifying the customer of the cumulative points. The Examiner was unable to find support in the specification where the customer terminal accesses a website and Applicant did not point out any specific passages supporting this limitation. Therefore the Examiner interprets the website to be any host computer accessed to retrieve notification information. Schultz teaches a program management computer system that is a host computer and it provides information on the purchase rewards used to notify the customer (column 7, lines 45-68 and Figure 2). For these reasons, claim 78 stands rejected. Claims 79-91 contain similar limitations as that of claim 78 and therefore stand rejected in a similar manner and as stated in the previous office action, mailed 25 August 2005.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stefano Karmis whose telephone number is (571) 272-6744. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F: 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vincent Millin can be reached on (571) 272-6747. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Respectfully Submitted
Stefano Karmis
28 April 2006



HANI M. KAZIMI
PRIMARY EXAMINER